



HUI HO'OMALU
STATEWIDE
RESOURCE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

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Building Connections

A Newsletter for Foster/Resource Families



Volume 1, Issue 3

April 2008

www.fostercaremonth.org

May is National Foster Care Month

A Mother and Daughter Reunion

By Agnes Mikosabe, Birth Parent

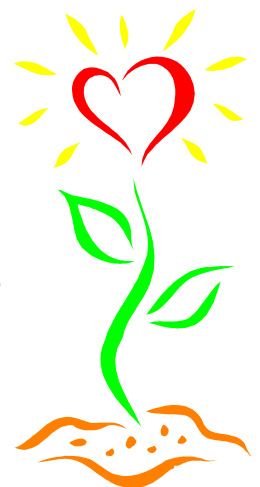
After a ten year separation, being reunited with my daughter K is wonderful. Finally the ache in my heart has gotten smaller. K is a bright, beautiful, talented young lady who is striving to meet her goals. I'm very proud of her.

But this reunion has had its challenges too. It's a big adjustment for both of us. Though I hate to admit it, I know I failed her as a mom. Domestic violence, drugs, and my own painful past all played a part, but the bottom line was I didn't nurture or protect her the way a mom should.

An important part of our healing took place in a ho'oponopono co-led by a Queen Liliuokalani Children Center therapist and the EPIC 'Ohana Engagement Specialist. K expressed her hurt and anger; I was able to take responsibility and tell her the past abuse wasn't her fault. It felt so good, after all these years, to say that out loud, and for both of us to hold each other and sob. It was a powerful moment that I will always remember and cherish.

Now I'm trying to be here for K in ways I wasn't when she was a child. It's not always easy. During those years of separation K stayed a child in my mind. Suddenly, with reunification, I'm facing a young woman who very much has a mind of her own. "How do you talk to teens?" I asked friends. I had no experience being a mom of a teen.

K and I are building a new relationship. I'm learning I can't talk to K like she's a child. I have to respect her independence and let her make her own choices. I can give her my advice and opinions, but she's on her own path now. Sometimes it hurts to recognize so much of her development happened without me, but at other times I'm grateful for the strong young woman she's become. My biggest fear is that I'll fail her again, but I remind myself to just keep doing the best I can. As I try to improve my own situation, I feel the preciousness of having her back in my life. I'm grateful to see my daughter come into her own as an adult. She's truly an amazing person.



**HUI HO'OMALU
STATEWIDE
RESOURCE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

The Hui Ho'omalua Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) provides support to the foster/resource family community through identifying ongoing needs, facilitating communication and by sharing resources.

The Building Connections Newsletter is published four times a year to provide information regarding foster and adoptive care to foster/resource parents, service providers, legal guardians and to the public.

This newsletter may be viewed on the following websites:

[www.hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/
social_services/child_welfare/
foster](http://www.hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/foster)

www.pidfoundation.org

To be placed on the mailing list or if you would like to receive an electronic copy, please call 441-1125 (O'ahu), 888-879-8970 (Toll Free) or E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

Partners in Development
Foundation
2040 Bachelot St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817-2433

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My Story...

By Jacquelyn Gamboa, Former Foster Youth

My name is Jacquelyn but everyone calls me Jackie. I have three sisters and a brother. Growing up, I can remember my parents always fighting. They always fought about money because my mother was a heavy gambler. Occasionally she would become physically violent towards my father and he would just sit there and take it. It was hard seeing my parents fight because I never wanted to take sides. I loved them both and couldn't understand why they were always arguing. Because of my mother's gambling, she wouldn't be home days at a time. My father was hardly home either because he worked 2 jobs. So my siblings and I basically took care of ourselves. My older sister went into foster care a year or two before my siblings and I did so I was the one taking care of my brother and sister when my parents weren't around.



My siblings and I fell into foster care after a physical altercation between my mother and father. After this incident, they both walked out of the house and into the garage. My dad looked at me and it felt like he was trying to tell me everything was going to be okay. Then, they were gone. I can't remember what happened next. Everything went by so fast and in such a blur. When I was first placed in foster care, it was hard concentrating in school. I felt like my world had just been ripped to pieces and I was all alone. I barely passed the 7th grade.

For various reasons, my siblings and I moved between four different foster homes. Our third foster home was our longest placement. My siblings and I stayed at this home for 4 years. My foster parents were a Christian couple who were deeply involved in church. While with them, I realized that life wasn't so bad after all. It was up to me to turn my life around. I got my act together in school and started getting on the Honor Roll. I was involved in our church's youth group and also began piano lessons. I also became a mentor for the Kapi'olani Mentoring Program. This program has helped me realize that I was not alone and that there was a positive side of foster care. While this placement was positive, we seemed to outgrow that home and needed a home that was a better fit for older teens. This is why I moved into my fourth foster home. My last foster parents really understood how I felt. They gave me boundaries but still enough room to grow. As long as I did my chores and did okay in school, I was allowed to go out with my friends. My foster parents met all my friends and knew that they could trust me to make good decisions. This allowed me to think for myself and grow as a young adult. When I graduated from high school, I cried. I was so proud of myself for overcoming so many obstacles and still getting my high school diploma. It's so funny because in all my pictures from graduation, I'm crying or look like I've been crying.

I still keep in contact with my foster parents. Although I do have contact with my biological parents, it's not really a child and parent relationship. I see my parents more like friends than parents. Although I see my biological parents on a daily basis, I'm not as close with them as I am with my foster parents. They were and still are very supportive. When I encounter a situation where I don't know what to do or just need someone to talk to, I call my foster parents. They are always there to listen, help me come up with solutions, and support me with whatever I decide to do. I love my foster parents dearly and appreciate everything they have done for me.

Now I'm proud to say that I am a full time college student as well as a full time mom. I gave birth to a beautiful son on May 20, 2005. And although it took me quite some time, I have earned my Associates degree in Liberal Arts and am currently finishing up my Bachelors in Elementary Education. I am still a mentor for the Kapi'olani Mentoring Program and have been for the past nine years. This program has helped me meet other people who are or have been in foster care who can relate to what I've been through and help turn it into a positive experience. I also work part time for the Kapi'olani Child Protection Center as a Social Service Assistant. I have been working hard to spread the news about our new Survivors Offering Support Line. Our peer mentors hope to empower Hawaii's youth and help them take control of their lives to successfully exit the foster care system and become successful adults. The Survivors Offering Support Line can be reached at: 808-535-7708 (O'ahu) or 1-888-535-7790 (Toll Free).

Mama Kazama's Mantra Moments...

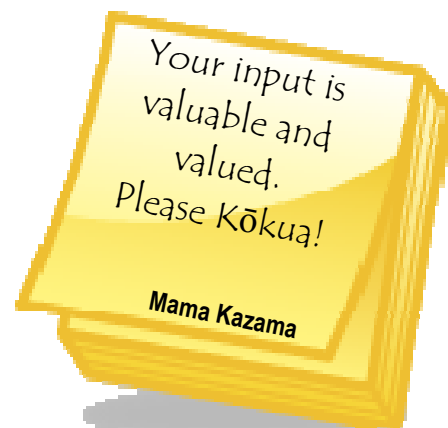
By Lynne Kazama, DHS Program Development Staff



**Springtime
Mama Kazama**

ONGOING SYSTEMS CHANGE: MALAMA our keiki, families and community! DHS has been working hard internally and with our community partners and stakeholders to improve services and resources for our keiki and families.

Just as DHS undergoes various reviews, we have also asked our providers/partners to ensure that there is Quality Assurance in services they provide in collaboration with DHS. Therefore, DHS contracted providers may be contacting you for your feedback. Your input is valuable and valued. Please Kōkua!



WHO IS MAMA KAZAMA??? Let us introduce Lynne Kazama, the person behind Mama Kazama's Mantra Moments, to you. Lynne is a social worker with many years of foster care experience. She has worked for DHS and other private agencies, gaining much of her experience from her 18+ years with Casey Family Programs. Since 2003, Lynne has been working in the DHS Program Development Office. Lynne is a passionate advocate and supporter of all involved in the foster care system including the birth families, foster youth, foster families and staff involved in the process. Sometimes her PASSION overflows...and it spins off as Mantras.

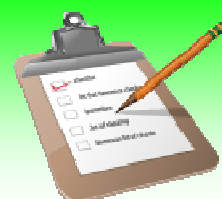
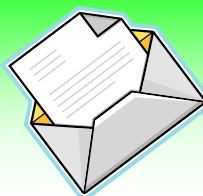
Your Participation Is Valuable

Participate in completing surveys or a focus group and be eligible to win great prizes!



**Prizes
and
Giveaways!**

If you have successfully completed the licensing process with Hui Ho'omalua or Catholic Charities Hawai'i, you are eligible to win great prizes and receive gift incentives if you complete our surveys or participate in a scheduled focus group (if selected). Participating in these activities will benefit our program as we continuously strive to improve our services for foster parents statewide. If you are not interested in participating, please contact; Jason Badua, Quality Assurance & Improvement Specialist at: (808) 441-1126.



The Annual Conference for Foster/Resource Families “Helping Children in Foster Care Stay Connected to Their ‘Ohana/Kin, Culture, and Community”

Guest Speaker: Lorrie Lutz, MPP

This open and candid discussion will inspire and challenge participants to:

- Consider the evolving role of foster/resource families in meeting the needs of children in care
- Explore definitive ways that birth families and foster/resource families can partner together
- Think about the critical role that foster/resource families can and must play in keeping a child connected to their culture, race, and ethnicity

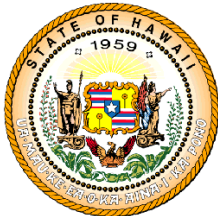
Come and participate in conversation that will change how you work with children and their families! You make a difference!



Presented By:



FOSTER FAMILY PROGRAMS
OF HAWAII



Department of Human Services



- Open to all Resource Families (Foster, Adoptive, Kinship, Guardianship)
- Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided
- Conference is **FREE** to all resource families
- Door Prize drawings throughout the day
- Childcare will be provided for children ages 5-12

Save the Date

Monday, June 2, 2008

Maui

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Hilo

Wednesday, June 4, 2008

Kona

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Kauai

Saturday, June 7, 2008

Oahu

Time for all conferences is 9 am - 3 pm

Locations for each island TBA

For more information, please contact the Warm Line @ (808)545-1130 (Oahu)
1-866-545-0882 (Toll free for Neighbor Islands)

Happy Anniversary!

How long have you been a foster/resource parent? We would like to honor you by printing your name and current years of service in our newsletter.

We know you are out there but we need your help. Please send your name and years of service to:

RAC@pidfoundation.org
(Oahu) 441-1125
(Toll Free) 888-879-8970

Mahalo for your dedication & hard work!



Help! Looking For Stories!

Would you like to share some helpful tips? Got an inspirational story to tell? Know of some useful resources in your community?

These are just some of the many possibilities that you can contribute to this newsletter. Please send them over so we can all benefit from each other's wisdom!

Suggestions? Feedback?

We would appreciate any feedback, comments and suggestions on ways that we can improve this newsletter so that it is useful to you. What would you like to see in it? Topics of interest?

We look forward to hearing from you!

E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org
441-1125 (O'ahu)
888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

Community Classifieds

Do you have something that you would like to donate to other foster/resource parents but you don't know how to get the word out? Are you looking for something that would help you care for your foster/adoptive keiki but you don't know where to find it? The **Community Classifieds** may be able to help.

Let's help each other by sharing our resources. The **Community Classifieds** is FREE to post items to donate as well as wanted ads if you are looking for items to help you care for your keiki.

Send your classified ads to: E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org
(Oahu) 441-1125 or (Toll Free) 888-879-8970

Advertise in the Newsletter—Promote Your Business

100% of the proceeds will be used towards supporting our foster/resource families

Display advertisements with borders: business card size = \$30; 1/4 page = \$50; 1/2 page = \$75; full page = \$115.

Send information to:

Hui Hoomalu—RAC, 680 Iwilei Rd., Ste. 500, Honolulu, HI 96817

Phone: 441-1125 (Oahu); 888-879-8970 (Toll Free); Fax: 441-1122; E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

Hui Ho'omalua RAC reserves the right to accept, reject or edit advertisements, articles and notices of events based on publication schedule, space limitations, and appropriateness.

MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

Join in on these statewide events to honor foster/resource parents, raise awareness and engage caring adults to “change a lifetime” for our keiki.

OAHU:

Presented by the Foster Care Training Committee



May 1– Proclamation of Foster Care Month

Kick off foster care month! There will be a Proclamation, Sign Waving, Stories from the Foster Care Community, Supporters of Foster Care, and Certificates of Appreciation.

Hawai'i State Capitol from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

For Further Information, Contact David Louis at 295-1929

May 3– Talent Show

Share your talent! Event to showcase the talent of youth in foster care. Heavy pupus will be served.

Planet Hollywood from 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

To Register Your Talent and RSVP, Contact David Louis at 295-1929

May 9– Windward Resource Families Support Group

Support Groups are open to all Resource Parents. “Relaxation and Rejuvenation” to pamper the parents. Dinner and Childcare provided.

Faith Baptist Church from 5:30 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.

RSVP by contacting Matthew Simmons at 521-9531 ext. 226

May 16– Waianae Resource Families Support Group

Support Groups are open to all Resource Parents. “Relaxation and Rejuvenation” to pamper the parents. Dinner and Childcare provided.

Maluhia Lutheran Church from 5:30 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.

RSVP by contacting Matthew Simmons at 521-9531 ext. 226

May 23– Halawa Resource Families Support Group

Support Groups are open to all Resource Parents. “Relaxation and Rejuvenation” to pamper the parents. Dinner and Childcare provided.

Halawa District Park from 5:30 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.

RSVP by contacting Matthew Simmons at 521-9531 ext. 226

May 24– Foster Parent Appreciation/Recruitment Fair

Historic Bishop Museum is hosting Foster Families for a Special Day! Exciting Demonstrations, Keiki Activities, and Fun for all! Teen Zone too!

Bring Your Family and Friends.

Free Admission to Fair

\$5.00 General Admission and \$3.00 Keiki (ages 4-12) Admission to Galleries.

Bishop Museum from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

For Further Information, Contact Jennifer Cilfone at 349-8906



EAST HAWAII:*Presented by E. Hawaii Friends of Foster Families***May 3– Foster Parent Mahalo Luncheon**

Mahalo luncheon for foster parents in E. Hawaii.
Lunch, Door Prizes, and Guest Speakers!
Church of the Holy Cross from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
RSVP by contacting Michele Carvalho at 987-5988

May 7– Sign Waving

Bay front by soccer fields from 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
For more information, contact Michele Carvalho at 987-5988

WEST HAWAII:*Presented by Hui Ho'omalu a partnership of DHS, PIDF, CCH, FFP and Community Representatives***May 3– Foster Parent Appreciation Luncheon**

Appreciation luncheon for foster parents in W. Hawaii. Lunch,
Live Music, Guest Speakers & Prizes!
Keauhou Beach Resort from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
RSVP by contacting Sarah Kobayashi at 884-5280

Sign Waving

May 2 (3-5 PM): Kailua-Kona on Mamalahoa Hwy. below Walmart
(Contact Person: Linda Case at 896-3829)

May 9 (3-5 PM): Waimea on Mamalahoa Hwy in front of the Police Station in
the Center of town (Contact Person: Susan Acacio at 885-5043)

May 16 (3-5 PM): Kohala in Kapaau near the Elementary School
(Contact Person: Sarah Kobayashi 884-5280)

May 23 (3-5 PM): Kealahou/Captain Cook on Mamalahoa Hwy near the
Kainaliu Flower Shop (Contact Person: Erin Basque 327-2716)

MAUI:*Presented by the State of Hawai'i,
Dept. of Human Services, Maui CWS***May 26– Treasured Keiki Day**

Foster, Adoptive and Legal Guardianship Families will enjoy a day of
Fun including Bumper Boat Rides, Rock Climbing, Trampoline Jumping, &
Miniature Golf at this 4th Annual Event!
Maui Golf and Sports Park beginning at 10:00 a.m.
For more information, contact Scott Seto at 243-4604

KAUAI:*Presented by State of Hawai'i,
Dept. of Human Services, Kauai CWS***May 27– Foster Parent Appreciation Luncheon**

Appreciation luncheon for foster parents in Kauai.
Hanamaulu Cafe from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
For more information, contact Marcia Ota at 274-3003

MOLOKAI:*Presented by Hui Ho'omalu a partnership of DHS,
PIDF, CCH, FFP and Community Representatives***Events to be Announced!**

For more information, contact Carol Morimoto at 441-1125 (Oahu) or
888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

LANAI:*Presented by Hui Ho'omalu a partnership of DHS,
PIDF, CCH, FFP and Community Representatives***Events to be Announced!**

For more information, contact Carol Morimoto at 441-1125 (Oahu) or
888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

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2040 Bachelot St.
Honolulu, HI 96817-2433

441-1125 (O'ahu)
888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

Fax: 441-1122

E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

The concept for the Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was created by the Department of Human Services (DHS) as a means to support the foster/resource family community. Hui Ho'omalū facilitates this committee comprised of foster/resource parents and various community agencies, all dedicated to providing services and support to Hawai'i's keiki and the foster/resource families who care for them. The purpose of the RAC is to identify ongoing needs, facilitate communication, share resources, provide information through a statewide calendar of events and a quarterly newsletter and report on local projects and other topics of interest to benefit Hawai'i's foster/resource families.

RAC Committee Members:

Catholic Charities Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalū
Department of Health

Department of Human Services

EPIC, Inc. 'Ohana Conferencing

Family Court

Foster Family Programs of Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalū

Foster/Resource Parents

Hawai'i Foster Parent Association

Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition

Heart Gallery Hawai'i

HOPE INC

Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalū & Kōkua 'Ohana

Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center

University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work

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